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PEDAGOGY, PARTNERSHIP, AND PRACTICE: CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
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ABSTRACT

Service-learning has been prominently featured as a best or high impact practice for education. Yet throughout its existence, this pedagogy has been troubled with questions regarding its effectiveness, controversy in its impact on communities, and even confusion surrounding what its definition is. Within the Anthropology Department at Minnesota State University, Mankato, the impact of service-learning has often been uncertain, with exemplary stories coming out as much as negative ones. This mixed success of service-learning's application throughout the years motivated Dr. Susan Schalge to commission a student research project in 2012 to interview service-learning stakeholders to obtain a more certain grasp of the program's successes and failures. This thesis builds upon this and other research, with a focus on understanding service-learning issues faced by the department through a mixed-method, qualitative approach, and through eclectic theoretical frameworks. Specifically, this research draws heavily from practice theory, in particular the work of Michel de Certeau, who considers power relations in terms of strategies by the powerful and tactics used by the less powerful in response. This research examines several strategies and tactics in use by students, community partners, and the department to better understanding how different parties maneuver to advance their respective agendas.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Within Minnesota State University, Mankato, The Anthropology Department operates a service-learning program largely independent of the larger university. This program was an integral part of the department for many years, providing an experiential foundation to the concepts discussed in several classes, sometimes leading to advanced research projects and theses for students. Despite years of operation, integration within the curriculum, and durable connections made within the community, this program has been scaled back after being dogged for years by rumors of the program's ineffectiveness.

These rumors gave rise to an extensive, qualitative, review of the program initiated at the request of Susan Schalte in 2012. This early research considered student and departmental perspectives to determine the effectiveness of service-learning in practice. This research was insightful, but only provided part of the complex picture of service-learning. To get a more holistic perspective, the research added community partner and policy perspectives. Building upon this foundation of earlier research, this thesis elaborates the research on students and community partners. This research also deepens the consideration of practice theory present within Schalte and Pajunen's 2016 presentation at the American Anthropological Association's Annual Meeting.

While practice theory is itself an eclectic body of theory, this thesis pulls from a even broader body of disciplines to better understand the practice of service-learning. Resource dependency theory, an organizational analysis of a focal organization's connections and dependence on resources, is discussed in relation to community partner strategies and tactics. The idea of meta-education is incorporated into anthropological

theories of learning, in particular the work of Bateson as elaborated by Bredo. It is through this multi-method analysis and novel combination of theoretical lenses that practices of service-learning as they occurred within the Anthropology Department become elucidated and motivations of agents operating within the context are made more coherent.

CHAPTER II: SETTING

During the time of this analysis, there were sweeping changes occurring within the department, the university, and the Minnesota State system (Which was up until recently called the Minnesota State Colleges and University System). Within all three of these settings, service-learning was considered a high impact practice. These practices are suggested to benefit learning outcomes, retention, persistence, completion, belonging, especially of those often neglected by traditional educational efforts (Kuh 2008). Yet, during the years the research was being conducted, service-learning continued shifting from a priority form of engagement to a lesser one. This author, as well as the researchers and instructors he collaborated with, were puzzled as to why this was happening, but saw the same shift occur within the department.

These university-wide policies and structures for engagement structures are first considered in the setting. Working down from there, the history of the service-learning program within the department is examined next. Lastly, I reflect on past service-learning research collaborations within the Anthropology Department.

University Policies and Structures of Engagement

Understanding the larger context of university policies of engagement is crucial to understanding the trajectory of service-learning with the department. Minnesota State University, Mankato is a mid-level public university, master's granting institution. A part of the Minnesota State system that is composed of "31 institutions (24 technical and community colleges and seven state universities) spanning 54 campuses across 47 MN communities serving nearly 400,000 students annually" (Minnesota State 2017). Within the university, the Office of Community Engagement is responsible for coordination of

service-learning activities within the university. This coordination was formerly done by the Office of Community Based Research and Academic Service-Learning housed under Academic Affairs (Schalge, Pajunen, and Skinner 2014). Now, this work is done by the Office of Community Engagement housed within student affairs under the student life division. Furthermore, the director's position is a part-time, temporary position, split between the office and the management of a local non-profit food organization closely tied to the university, but operated out of a nearby church.

The Office of Community Engagement is the university department most specialized in service-learning, but arguably, most service-learning exists outside of the office. Departments like ours manage their own service-learning affairs, but sometimes individual professors manage service-learning for their classes independent of their departments. As a result, much of where service-learning is happening is unknown. During an interview with the director of the Office of Community Engagement, even she noted that there is not a centralized annex for service-learning or even an awareness of all the places it is currently happening.

Despite a lack of centrality or awareness of service-learning, let alone all the other forms of engagement, the university crafts policy to motivate the usage of engaging pedagogies. At our university, this policy for engagement was crafted per the conditions of the larger culture. These larger conditions are related to the overall political climate and the gradual change of the university system due to neo-liberal processes. Students are now being invited to engage for-profit entities as a method of bridging the gap between student and professional. This is the academy responding to public mandates that education be clearly linked to “real-world” concerns, with institutions being required to

justify their mission, costs, and activities (Kecskes, 2006, p. 1).

Campus Compact is a national organization that has led the charge for community engagement at universities in a variety of forms, most notably through academic service-learning. Mirroring the changes that have occurred with the university, Campus Compact has altered their stance on service-learning as well. This change is indicated in the following e-mail excerpt from Julie Plaut, Executive Director at Minnesota Campus Compact:

Many campuses have shifted their language from service-learning to civic, community, or public engagement because the service word sounds more one directional and they're seeking to emphasize more collaborative, respectful approaches to communities and/or providing a wide range of opportunities for students to learn and work with communities (e.g., community-based work-study, community-based research, paid internships), which sometimes allow for more substantial (either long-term or extensive) engagement experiences than a single class and more students with financial need to participate. A few campuses in Minnesota have reduced staffing for service-learning, but more have held steady or increased staffing for this broader sense of the work--and more centers/offices have moved to the academic affairs side to emphasize experiential learning's importance. It's a complicated and distinctive story in each place, though. (Julie Plaut, February 4, 2016, e-mail message to Susan Schalge)

Campus Compact, years earlier, had a different perspective regarding service-learning and student engagement: “We also challenge higher education to become engaged, through actions and teaching, with its communities. We have a fundamental task to renew our role as agents of our democracy. This task is both urgent and long-term” (Campus Compact 1999). Comparing the two discussions, the more recent correspondence offers no mention of democratic ideals and eschews the long-term role mentioned in the earlier version for Campus Compact. Most importantly, the newer discussion mentions that there is a decrease in staffing associated with service-learning,

suggesting a movement away from the urgency and long-term nature of the earlier discussion of service-learning.

Charting the Future and Areas of Distinction

A key strategy within Minnesota State System for the overhaul of the system towards more neo-liberal inclinations is Charting the Future. Within the six primary recommendations of Charting the Future made in 2013, there is an intent to “Develop a collaborative and coordinated academic planning process that advances affordability, transferability, and access to our programs and services across the state” (3).

Furthermore, recommendation number five of the report is to “Work together under new models to be the preferred provider of comprehensive workplace solutions through programs and services that build employee skills and solve real-world problems for communities and businesses” (3).

These recommendations are connected to a movement within the university towards more strategic planning and overt connection with university goals by requiring academic master planning of all programs. This movement intensified with the identification of “areas of distinction” by the university to which all programs must now conform. These defining ideas, in turn, often conform to the larger, system-wide initiatives of Charting the Future. These areas of distinction are described as:

Twelve overarching areas of distinction – academic, research, industry – for our university, by 2018, emerged and set the stage for further conversation, clarification, and confirmation over the next three years, and as we look toward our next 150 years In alphabetical arrangement, they are: Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; Business, Management, and Financial Services; Creative and Performing Arts; Data and Information Sciences; Education and Human Services; Engineering, Manufacturing, and Technology; Global Communications, Media, and Information Technologies; Health Care and Biomedical Sciences; Integrative

and Applied Disciplines; Marketing, Sales, and Professional Services; Public Policy and Administration; and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics. (MNSU 2017)

Due to the importance of these areas in academic master planning, all departments are attempting to fit into the above model. Anthropology is not directly represented within the areas of distinction, but does connect with many of them indirectly. Thus, the Anthropology Department must reframe or change what they do to better fit within this expanding paradigm. As it stands, faculty already are dealing with heavy teaching loads and continually expanding administrative duties. By adding further burden upon already labor-intensive service-learning, it becomes a less attractive practice to faculty. This is a somewhat ironic situation as service-learning within the department was a successful initiative that received both external financial support and improved community relations so often desired by administrators, while achieving engagement and diversity requirements for students.

History of the Service-Learning Program

The Department of Anthropology at Minnesota State University began its service-learning program in 2004 with the successful acquisition of a grant from Campus Compact (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2013). For this grant, the department worked with Community Assistance for Refugees, a local non-profit agency that provided services for immigration, housing assistance, transportation, advocacy and interpretation (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2014). The program began with one faculty member, one service-learning coordinator, and approximately 40 students. At its height, the program served around 300 students, who served for 1000-1250 hours in the classes Introduction

to Anthropology, Languages and Cultures, Peoples and Cultures, and upper-division courses as desired by the professor. Throughout the duration of the program, the practice of service-learning has been defined as:

a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular voluntary service, service-learning is a course-based service experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to the course material through reflection activities. (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996, 222)

Related to the above definition, when the service-learning, program began, it had five basic goals for participants: respect for and appreciation of diversity, enhanced leadership and citizenship skills, deeper understanding of social issues, improved academic understanding, and personal and professional development. Service-learning class components were tiered by increasing the number of hours with increasing class level. Lower-level course components were created in part with the idea of introducing student to the process of service-learning, to familiarize majors with the process they see in future courses. Courses with longer service-learning requirements served as the feedstock for advanced research projects, such as senior theses, but also graduate-level research, such as this project.

Research History

The department's qualitative research of the service-learning program began as the project "Service-Learning Impressions" in the graduate-level course Practicing Anthropology with Alvarez, Pajunen, and Skinner (2012). The initial purpose of this research was to add a qualitative sample to compare with an earlier survey by students, Hildebrant et. al's (2007), of Introduction to Anthropology students. Our research utilized qualitative interviewing of students and service-learning coordinators to examine the efficacy of service-learning within the department. This research expanded following the course to include faculty interviews, and resulted in a presentation at the American Anthropological Association's Annual meeting in 2013 (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2013). Then, the relationship between the department and external partners was considered, and the interviewing expanded to community partners and incorporated participant observation of events where students were performing service-learning (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2014). Consideration of the campus-community relationship, common understanding, and the definition of value and relevance in service-learning were added to the expanding research (Schalge and Pajunen 2015). Finally, the research examined policy with the department, the university, and Minnesota State System (Schalge and Pajunen 2017), and considering practice's impact on policy (Schalge and Pajunen 2016). This thesis research builds upon these works and discusses specifically how it is that students, community partners, and the department interact within the context of service-learning, with a focus on understanding strategic and tactical maneuvers by these parties.

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout this research cycle, a broad range of research within anthropology and the scholarship of teaching and learning have been considered. The earlier studies cited throughout this thesis discuss these two fields in greater detail than this thesis does. This thesis focuses largely on practice theory and how it relates to an understanding of the actions of agents within the context of service-learning, but draws from other disciplines to further elucidate practice. These works from anthropological theory of learning, organizational theory, and educational psychology, are designed to bridge the gaps between theory and practice.

Practice Theory

Essentially, practice theory studies individual practices and places them within the milieu of larger cultural systems of power. As Ortner, (1984) describes it “Modern practice theory seeks to explain the relationship(s) that obtain between human action, on the one hand, and some global entity which we may call ‘the system,’ on the other. Questions concerning these relationships may go in either direction—the impact of the system on practice, and the impact of practice on the system” (148). This field of study emphasizes the power of individuals in the form of agency and the unique ways they take to work around, within, and through dominating forces in society. Agents may be unwittingly conveying the power of these same dominating powers through their actions and routines: “In enacting these routines, actors not only continue to be shaped by the underlying organization principles involved, but continually re-endorse those principles in the world of public observation and discourse” (154).

Within this work, two authors' work on practice theory represent the bulk of the content, Michel De Certeau and Pierre Bourdieu. De Certeau, the lesser known of the two authors, is the primary contributor with his discussion of strategy and tactics, a system that depicts relationships between the culturally dominant and the dominated. Bourdieu's ideas of habitus, structures that create other structures, and field, a system of relationships between agents, are utilized as well throughout this thesis

De Certeau

Michel De Certeau's pivotal work *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984) provided the framework for understanding the patterns of behavior shown by the various service-learning participants. De Certeau's ideas of strategies and tactics are a fundamental part of this thesis as well as of the previous works, in particular Schalge and Pajunen (2016). Looking at the context of this study, Minnesota State System administration presents strategies for engagement, subsequent levels of educational structure respond with their tactics, carrying downward all the way into individual students.

Strategies/Tactics

In De Certeau's own words, "I call strategy the calculus of force relationships, which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (A proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an environment" (1984, xix). Strategies, within service-learning, are implemented by the university, the department, and community partners; groups that possess some measure of power over another group. Tactics, then, are implemented in response to these strategies, "a tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety" (xix). He

further elaborates “because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time-it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized ‘on the wing.’ Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events to turn them into ‘opportunities’” (xix). To combine and paraphrase, tactics are responses to strategies set forth by those less powerful operating from a placeless area in opposition to those who have a place. Within this research, the least powerful discussed party would be the students, who have no “place” and rely solely on tactics as a means of exercising agency. This does not mean that they are powerless, however, they agile and resourceful, and their acts of resistance can disrupt strategies of the more powerful.

Within this theoretical framework, there are several relationships between strategies and tactics being actively employed. It should be noted that this research describes these hierarchically, contrary to De Certeau, who describes these relationships more dyadically between agents. Starting at the top, the Minnesota State system is implementing strategies that individual universities and departments must conform to. The universities formulate their policy pursuant to that and enact policy for departments. Professors, as parts of departments working on fulfilling initiatives or applying service-learning within their courses simply as a pedagogy, create strategies that then the community partners and students must respond to as tactics. Community partners craft strategies that students respond to in order to successful service-learn at a given site.

Tactics represent “snowy waves of the sea slipping in among the rocks and defiles of an established order” (De Certeau 1984, 34). Over a decade of tactics by students, service-learning coordinators, and community partners, led to its decline; “currents in this sea theoretically governed by the institutional frameworks that it in fact gradually erodes

and displaces” (34). The review of the program, which led to this research, was an attempt to rebuild the crumbling structure. The role of this research, then, is to supply instructions for building service-learning in a manner where it is out of reach of the sea whenever possible, and to promote active custodianship of service-learning by its stakeholders.

Making-do

Key to tactics is the idea of making-do. One notable form of this, is *la perruque*, which is defined succinctly by De Certeau as “the worker’s own work disguised as work for his employer” (25). This is fitting what we already do into the template provided by the more powerful. This form of making do is extremely prevalent at all levels researched by this study. Students, community partners, departments, even the discipline of anthropology itself, reframe their activities as a way of meeting the goals and initiatives crafted by more powerful groups. The areas of distinction put forward by the university, for example, require making-do, with the department having to figure out ways to present their work as being perhaps related to agriculture, food, or natural resources.

Bourdieu

Bourdieu's theory of practice contributes the idea of *habitus*, or "dispositions [which] function as structuring structures...which generate and organize practices" (Bourdieu 1990, 53). Per Bourdieu, "The practical world that is constituted in the relationship with the habitus, acting as a system of cognitive and motivating structures, is a world of already realized ends - procedures to follow, paths to take" (53). These "structuring structures" unconsciously influence agents at all levels to act in certain ways and essentially follow scripts. An example of this found within service-learning is thinking of service-learning as volunteering. True to an unconscious practice, this was found to be surprisingly durable, with interviewees of all levels referring to service-learning by the name volunteering. With this habitus, the strategies and tactics implemented by stakeholders work to reform the system in the image of volunteering. When a community partner treats a service-learner as a volunteer or a service-learner avoids doing work because they perceive their task as volunteering bereft of curricular attachment, they form the waves that wear away the structure of the program.

Another important concept that Bourdieu introduces in his later work *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993) is the concept of "field." A field is a hierarchically arrayed system of agents, which may be institutions or individuals, whose positions overlap and interact with one another (6-7). Actors vie for positions within each field, leveraging their capital to advance positions. Service-learners, community partners, and departments create their own complex field of positions relative to the amount of capital each possess, within each group and between groups. The relative positions of community partners within the community, for example, are based on their ability to acquire service-learners

through influencing the university. These service-learners implement the community partners' programming and allow them to expand their reach and position relative to the other non-profits in the area.

Field is also subject to the influence of habitus, as Bourdieu (1993) notes. The landscape of what is possible within a given field is determined by the habitus (70). The unconscious beliefs of service-learning as volunteering held by students reshapes how community partners are dealt with by students. As habitus is pervasive as well as unconscious, the whole community is reshaped by these interactions. Habitus acts upon individuals, which in their aggregate determines the field. Bourdieu discussed this relationship as follows:

within each state of the field -- as a function of the structure of the possibles which are manifested through the different positions and the properties of the occupants (particularly with respect to social origin and the corresponding dispositions), and also as a function of the positions actually and potentially occupied within the field. . . (70)

Anthropological Theory of Learning

Within the early literature of Anthropology of Education, a 1955 summary of the literature by Quillen defines education as "the instrument through which cultures perpetuate themselves. It is the process through which the members of a society assure themselves that the behavior necessary to continue their culture is learned" (1). This branch of anthropology of education, advocating a processual understanding of education, became focused on case studies, school ethnographies, and concern for how different people experienced education, with little development of theory of education (Spindler 1973, 16). However, a separate subdiscipline, the anthropology of learning, briefly emerged that shed some light on these processes.

Before segueing into the study of cybernetics, Bateson developed a theory of learning. Bateson's theory of learning differs from most, as it focuses on learning as a process of communication (Bredo 1989, 27). This style of learning has more in common with the thinking of Dewey than it does of Piaget, essentially (37). Key to this concept of learning, is the idea of educational context, first discussed by Bateson, later developed by Bredo. Context is crucial because, as Bredo (1989) remarks it is “. . .true of the observer who must also be able to place events in their appropriate contexts. To do otherwise is to destroy the structure of the activity and would be as senseless as solving arithmetic problems irrespective of parentheses organizing them” (35). For service-learning, the complex context of the real world connects multiple levels of analysis. Bredo discusses context in the following excerpt:

Thus for Bateson a context is the particular whole which a given part helps compose, not something separate from or abstracted from that part. This way of thinking of contents and contexts in part/whole terms, rather than in terms of inside and outside, makes the concept useful for linking multiple levels of analysis rather than for isolating analysis at each level (29).

Confrontation of this whole may be overwhelming for students, however, in the absence of meta-education. The idea of meta-education falls in-line with what Bateson describes as “learning II” (Bredo 1989, 33). Learning II includes anything that alters the process of learning, from learning how a student learns best to learning how teachers teach. Key to this type of learning is understanding the organizing structure of learning (34). This is where meta-education comes in. Meta-education, educating students about education, helps students understand these organizing structures and purposes behind education by helping them understand the cultural context they are immersed within.

Meta-education

Johnston et al. (1991) defined meta-education as “helping students become informed, sophisticated, and self-directed learners” (190). This is facilitated by “equipping them to think about their goals and what they are learning so that they become more purposefully involved with their academic lives, including especially that large portion devoted to general education. (190)” This process is designed to address the “demand side” of general education, “the understandings, concerns, and attitudes students bring to this coursework” (181). As mentioned above, this practice, as a learning strategy, is an intentional effort to couch education within a larger context of education and the greater value of education for students.

Ideally, this process begins early and continues throughout students’ educational experiences (Johnston et. al. 1991, 191). Extending this idea to a more local level, this involves specific classes, such as service-learning, making learning objectives explicit and framing these objectives in terms of longer-term goals rather than just requirements for fulfilling a course. Within this research, during interviews with instructors, it was evident that instructors were familiar with the greater application of the anthropological techniques students were applying through service-learning. Unfortunately, their students were not aware of how, specifically, what they were doing was connected to these broader concerns. Had these connections been made, meta-education becomes the base of a framework that supports learning through reflection.

Reflection

The important role of reflection as a means of understanding service-learning are described by Eyler (2002) in the following passage: “Knowledge and deep understanding come through a process of constructing knowledge through assessment of experience. Thought and action cannot be separated” (520). Eyler uses Dewey’s definition of reflection as “persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (533). Unfortunately, this definition is not often met by service-learning programs. Drawing from the work of King and Kitchener, Eyler notes that the level of reasoning possessed by many students is inadequate to comprehend the nuanced social contexts present in service-learning situations (521). Service-learning may represent a means by which students can develop these manners of thinking, however (522). To properly ensure the development of more complex thinking patterns in students, it is paramount that these issues be framed in a manner where they can be make these connections. This is done through deliberate incorporation of reflection activities within the curriculum, essentially by building courses around service-learning rather than adding service-learning to a course.

One type of deliberate incorporation of reflection cited by Eyler is preflection. Preflection is related to scaffolding and meta-education discussed earlier, but focuses more on the groups that will be worked with and preparation for the experience working with them. Eyler (2002) describes this practice as “Taking time before beginning the community service assignment to explore assumptions about the community, about the issues to be addressed as part of the course, and to identify gaps in understanding will

prepare students to be observant and aware of puzzling questions that arise in the course of their service experience” (524). This process helps students identify how they may think and feel about the group they are going to be working with, productively discuss these impressions with the class, and then create reflexivity within them during their work (525). This initial critical thinking, then, primes the pump for later critical thinking development through both experience and reflection.

There are, however, significant costs associated with incorporating preflection into a course. Time spent preflecting is time spent away from studying other elements of a course that may also support experiential education, such as instructing students in observation or writing skills. Community partners may not have the resources available to visit classes to adequately support preflection (Eyler 2002, 525). Preflection may also aid students in the process of fabricating reflections by providing them with the exact criteria the professor wants to see in a reflection. Lastly, preflection creates an outline that is more likely to be followed per the understandings of the professor or community partners, and leads them to more specific conclusions instead of allowing them to learn more from the environment, potentially limiting the experience of experiential education.

Course Design Conducive to Reflection

The process of course design begins with connecting to community partners. There are a few approaches a department can take towards connecting with community partners. The first allows students to locate a site for themselves, identify how it will connect, and serve there, ideally with approval. The second method of project selection relies on community partners to identify a project prior to service-learners, usually in collaboration with a professor. Eyler notes that the second style of project identification is

most conducive to learning. Through this approach, students have been shown to obtain a deeper understanding of the content they are studying (Eyler 2002, 526). Furthermore, service-learning using this problem-solving approach provides the continual reflection suggested to be helpful for student learning. Continuous reflection can be a time-consuming thing to implement, especially if the service-learning aspect of the course is an additional to the course material. As mentioned above, this can be aided by structuring the course around the service experience, but the authors do not consider how creating and maintaining ties sufficient to create custom-built service projects would also require substantial time commitments from instructors (528). Eyler suggests that this is further simplified by organizing an entire project around a single service project, but does not mention the costs associated with building and maintaining such close relationships.

Resource Dependence Theory

Relationships between organizations within the community can be contentious, even if their goals are aligned like they often are with service-learning. These patterns of organizational relation are described well within Pfeffer and Salancik's *The External Control of Organizations* (2003). Taken simply, this text describes how organizations of any type are subject to control by entities outside of their control due to the mere presence of other organizations within a given environment, a condition known as "interdependence" by the authors (36). The authors described the process of management by saying:

The task of organizational management, as developed from this view of organizations, is the management of the coalition to ensure continued support and survival of the organization. This task, which is problematic because of the reality of conflicting and competing demands, is necessary because of the organization's interdependence with other participants and organizations outside of its

boundaries—i.e., because of its need for activities that are not completely within its control. (37)

It is important to further elaborate on Pfeffer and Salancik's idea of interdependence. Contrary to the popular definition of the word, interdependence is not inherently positive, but can be positive or negative depending on the context.

“Interdependence exists whenever one actor does not entirely control all of the conditions necessary for the achievement of an action or for obtaining the outcome desired from the action” (40). Essentially, every organization is to some extent interdependent with other organizations because they rely on external parties for inputs or outputs:

“Interdependence is a consequence of the open-systems nature of organizations—the fact that organizations must transact with elements of the environment in order to obtain the resources necessary for survival” (43). Managing this interdependence, then, is crucial for ensuring successful operations, as all operations occur within this larger context and never completely independent of other organizations in the environment.

The authors delineate two forms of interdependence: outcome and behavior independence (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 41). Outcome can be summarized as interactions between organizations occurring within a context that includes other organizations. Outcome interdependence can be competitive or symbiotic. These are determined by if an actor uses the same resources as another or different, respectively. Behavior interdependence is defined as “the activities are themselves dependent on the actions of another social actor” (41). Behavior interdependence is engaging in a shared activity with another party. The example used by the authors is that of a poker game where each player is interdependent by participating in the game.

Interdependence often engenders dependence when relations are asymmetrical. The authors define dependence as: “the product of the importance of a given input or output to the organization and the extent to which it is controlled by a relatively few organizations” (51). They further elaborate, “Dependence, then, measures the potency of the external organizations or groups in the given organization’s environment” (52). Asymmetry is an inequality not simply of resources, but also of dependence. When an organization is less dependent on its partner, it is more powerful than its partner (53). This asymmetrical power can then be used to drive the dependent partner into submission further. It is possible for the less powerful partner to oppose the more powerful partner, but this requires the mobilization of additional external resources or partnerships to form a concentrated opposition (52). The magnitude and criticality of a resource are considerations as well for asymmetry of interdependence (46). Magnitude is simply how much of a given resource is involved, criticality refers to how important a given resource is. Greater magnitudes of a resource give more power to suppliers, while a great magnitude required by consumers can be a liability. This is compounded if a resource is critical to operations.

Having asymmetry of a critical resource creates uncertainty for an organization, as access to an external resource is under the control of another actor. However, as the authors discuss, “Uncertainty is only problematic when it involves an element of critical organizational interdependence” (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 68). Within most organizations there is uncertainty, it simply is managed by building coalitions and partnerships. In some situations, in order to address this condition of uncertainty, organizations may engage in acts of compliance. The authors define this trait as

“Compliance is a loss of discretion, a constraint, and an admission of limited autonomy” (94-95). Acts of compliance help reduce uncertainty by placating more powerful parties, ensuring better access to resources. These acts continue to reduce the autonomy of the organization, however, and may reduce their ability to survive in the long-term (95).

Taken all together within the context of service-learning, community partners are dependent on critical resources from the university, asymmetrically, and engage in acts of compliance in order to ensure their continued operations. Yet, the more they engage in these acts, the more their autonomy is reduced, and the more dependent they become on the university. Specific implications and examples of this relationships and other organizational issues will be elaborated later in this document.

CHAPTER IV: METHODS

This study utilizes a mixed-method, multi-perspective approach, combining interview, survey, and participant observation data to assess the effectiveness of service-learning as a means of teaching and learning about Anthropology. Following approval from the university's institutional review board, a qualitative, anthropological research methodology was employed to study the department's service-learning program to better understand contradictory assessments of it.

Semi-structured interviews were selected as a way of analysis to complement a previous study done by Hildebrant et. al (2007). Fifty-two interviews were conducted by Alvarez, Skinner, Pajunen and Schalge during this research. Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen (2013) interviewed 26 students with a total of 60 course experiences, seven faculty, four service learning coordinators, ten community partners, three administrators, and two engagement staff experts. Additionally, Skinner and Pajunen observed four community events. This study also tapped the authors' first-hand knowledge of instructing courses with service-learning components, with Schalge being the primary developer of the service-learning program in the Anthropology department.

Questions were designed to be neutral and open-ended grand-tour questions, for generating a more in-depth and authentic student and coordinator perception of service-learning (Bernard 2006; Spradley 1980), and were based on the questionnaire administered in the 2007 study by Hildebrant et al. These questions are available in Appendix A. Questions were crafted to determine how service-learners impacted organizations and how organizations felt they influenced service-learners. For example, both students and instructors were asked whether service-learning reinforced the material

learned in the class(es) and how service-learning affected the organization(s) with which they worked. Different groups were selected to counteract biases held by the respective groups.

Participants were originally identified through e-mail based on a random digit sample based on student ID (Bernard 2006). Due to a low response in the initial series of e-mails to students, a snowball method of sampling based on responses from the initial group of participants as well as from a convenience sampling of individuals. Although it was not random, the sample provided depth in service-learning experiences. Using this method provided a sample of individuals who had taken service-learning courses over multiple years, providing some perspective as to how the program had changed prior to the study. Students themselves often compared different courses, coordinators, site experiences, and professors in interviews. Twenty students had multiple experiences taking courses with service-learning. Individual “course experiences” were separated in interviews and through analysis, yielding a total of 60 course experiences for the 26 students interviewed. Courses were separated by the individual course number and level of the course in analysis. 77% of respondents were anthropology majors, providing greater voice to the most commonly affected constituency in our program. A total of seven community partners and all five Anthropology faculty members were interviewed. Following interviews, methods were expanded to include participant-observation of public, community events where service-learners fulfilled their commitments. These events were two fun runs, a weekend-long American Indian commemorative gathering, and a lawn cleanup event for local elders.

After collection, we performed a text analysis of all interview data using grounded-theory methods (Bernard, 2006; Miles & Huberman 1994); Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Prior to the first pass of grounded theory analysis, the researchers reviewed notes and interviews, partially transcribing audio when available, and noted emergent themes.

Following the interviews and participant observation, the research was refocused on university policy. This later policy work compared the university and Minnesota State system documents for the explicit purpose of understanding how engagement policy has changed within the university and what the origins were for these changes.

Complementing this textual research, Susan Schalge, PhD interviewed five university staff members regarding service-learning. This interviewing was open-ended, with Schalge modifying the questions relative to the position and expertise of the individual within Minnesota State University, Mankato.

CHAPTER V: STUDENT SERVICE-LEARNING RESEARCH

As with most service-learning research, this research studies students. In contrast to others, this research focuses on the ways in which students tactically maneuver within the context of service-learning rather than considering student outcomes. As mentioned above, this study combines multiple methods of data collection and analysis. Specifically, this analysis of students combines thematic coding, chi-squared testing, and a discussion of student tactics observed through participant observation or discussed during interviews.

Relation to Course Material

As a part of this study's grounded theory analysis, thematic coding was implemented on student interview transcripts. These codes emerged organically during the initial research conducted by Schalge, Pajunen, and Skinner in 2014, but have been developed in far greater detail in this paper. Additionally, the results of this coding were subject to Pearson's chi-squared test and adjusted residuals were calculated in an attempt to discern statistical significance within the three lower division classes (VanPool and Leonard 2011, 238-250).

The codes utilized were communicated unclear objectives (CUO) and "related to course material (RCM). Communicated unclear objectives was indicated when a student in some form or another indicated the site did not know what to do with them, did not understand why they were there, or in any other sense was confused regarding the service-learning situation. This was originally intended to be coded as either positive or

negative, but as there was no mention of good communication between sites and students (Perhaps because good communication is noticed less), the code was changed to communicated unclear objectives. This will be discussed later in the meta-education section.

Relation to course material was originally intended to be attached to specific sites as a method of determining which sites worked best for learners. As the coding continued, however, it became difficult to delineate whether connection was made by the site, through the course, or by themselves. Skinner and Pajunen originally had intended to indicate a direction of where the connections to course curriculum were coming from, but opted out of that practice when it became apparent that the direction of connection could not be known due to unclear origin of students' knowledge. One student remarked during an interview that he "made his own connections" to the course curriculum, for example.

Figure 1 shows the individuals and course experience results of the coding, grouped by class level. The number of individuals is provided, as is the number of course experiences held between the three groups. The 400/500 level courses were pooled because of the small sample of upper division courses. Individuals were categorized based on the higher level of course taken, to see if more experienced students were making connections better than less experienced students.

	100 Lvl	200 Lvl	400+ Lvl	Total
Individuals	5	16	5	26
Course Experiences	5	37	18	60

Figure 1. Respondents by Course Level

Figure 2 depicts the relationship to course material and the specific courses involved with service-learning components. The numbers assigned to courses correspond to the number of the courses within the Minnesota State University catalog: 101 is Introduction to Anthropology, 230 is Peoples and Cultures of the World, 240 is Language and Culture, and 400/500 corresponds to the three upper-division courses mentioned in interviews. This separation was done to see if specific courses were more amenable to a connection to course material than others. Despite being at the same level and with a similar number of course experiences, 230 has dramatically lower relation to course material than 240 by number.

Specific Course	101	230	240	400/500	Total
Course Exps.	20	16	19	5	60
RCM By Course	9	7	15	3	34
% of RCMs	0.45	0.4375	0.789474	0.6	0.56667

Figure 2. Course experiences and relation to course material (RCM).

Figure 3 compares anthropology majors against other majors. One limitation of this comparison is the small sample size of non-majors. Another is that majors were vastly more likely to take more and higher level anthropology courses. For these reasons, chi-squared testing was not implemented on these groups.

	Anth	Other	Total	% Anth	% Other
Individuals	20	6	26	0.769231	0.230769
Course Experiences	53	7	60	0.883333	0.116667
# of CUO Individuals	11	4	15	0.55	0.666667
Related to Course	29	5	34	0.54717	0.714286

Figure 3. Respondents by anthropology and other major

Figure 4 depicts the results of a Pearson's Chi-Squared Test. The association between the connection to course curriculum and the specific course. Within the table, the headings are abbreviations that correspond to the Anthropology Department's course numbers. Again, 101 is Introduction to Anthropology, 230 is Peoples and Cultures of the World, and 240 is Language and Culture. At an $\alpha=.05$, the test relationship was found to be statistically significant. This suggests that the three courses are not equal in the likelihood of developing connections to course curriculum.

Pearson's Chi Squared Test			
Observed Values	101	230	240
Connected	9	7	15
Did not Connect	11	9	4
Expected Values	101	230	240
Connected	11.27273	9.018182	10.70909
Did not Connect	8.727273	6.981818	8.290909
Chi-Square Values	101	230	240
Connected	0.458211	0.45165	1.719278
Did not Connect	0.591856	0.583381	2.220734

Figure 4. Pearson's Chi-Squared Test Results

Following the significance of the chi-squared test, residuals were analyzed to determine the source of variation. Looking at the results in figure 5, Anthropology 240, Language and Culture, appears to be the source of the variation within the matrix. This means that of the three courses, Language and Culture is more likely to develop

connections to course curriculum. The specific source of this increased likelihood within the course is unclear, however.

Standardized	101	230	240
Connected	-0.67691	-0.67205	1.311212
Did not Connect	0.769322	0.763794	-1.49021
Adjusted	101	230	240
Connected	-1.28456	-1.20816	2.453459
Did not Connect	1.284564	1.208163	-2.45346

Figure 5. Chi-Squared Residuals

While this analysis raises important questions regarding goodness-of-fit for service-learning within specific courses, it does have significant limitations. The sample is non-random and cannot be generalized. This study also pools current and past students in a course. Course experiences are not unique individual responses and are likely to be biased. Furthermore, the sample considers course experiences uncovered during interviewing and not specific question responses.

With that stated, the statistical analyses of this study are valuable, even if they are not generalizable. Other, frequently used measures of connection to course curriculum and communication effectiveness are also biased. Course evaluations, for example, are biased by how they are taken: within the classroom at the behest of a faculty member, a circumstance more biased than an interview given by a graduate student. Similar to course evaluations, the student interviews of this study involve a comparison between students' current experience with earlier experiences of education. At the bare minimum, the rigor of this study is superior than rumors and unsolicited responses by students, which despite their bias and informality, can still drive some academic decisions (Such as the decision to audit a service-learning program).

Student Tactics

Students are the lowest level of this analysis. Students, individually, do not engage in strategies. All agency by students occurs in the form of tactics, as students are the least powerful of the groups discussed in this thesis and are, therefore, subjected to the strategies and whims of the university, departments, and community partners. Students, as a group, have the least capital of the agents present within this field of analysis. The relationship between capital and power is described by Bourdieu (1993): “the most heteronomous cultural producers (i.e. those with the least symbolic capital) can offer the least resistance to external demands of whatever sort”(41).

Within this thesis, students’ tactics are classified as being compliant, avoidant, or subversive based on the effects to the department or community partners that the student interact with. Briefly summarized, compliant tactics are ones that go along with service-learning, sometimes to the detriment of the student. These tactics incur a cost to the student in performing service-learning, ideally with a benefit to the community partner and a longer-term benefit to the student in the form of becoming more educated. Avoidant tactics are tactics that avoid the work of service-learning or sidestep the service-learning portion of a class entirely. These tactics can cost the student in lost points, but may also cost the community partner in lost labor should the student by avoiding work on site. Lastly, subversive tactics are tactics that undermine the integrity of the program through fraud, distortion or manipulation. These tactics benefit the student and sometimes community partners, but cost the department.

Tactical Multiplication

Tactics for students in service-learning tend to appear in groups due to the interdependency of the parts. In this way, observation or mention of a single tactic may fail to account for subsequent tactics that are implied through the implementation of the first. I will refer to this as “tactical multiplication.” This could be seen in two forms, vertical and horizontal. Vertical multiplications occur when a student suffers a strategy or tactic from a community partner and then must respond with their own tactic. In this instance, vertical refers to the difference between levels of power, with students begin subordinate to community partners. An example of vertical multiplication is when a student goes to a site and gets reassigned like Brady, who will be mentioned later. From this experience, they are compelled to engage in a tactic in response, such as fabricating their reflection paper to account for being denied a meaningful service-learning experience. Horizontal multiplications occur within a single level of power, with a student enacting a tactic, then having to add others to keep ahead of the consequences of their first tactic. A student who chooses to wander at a site does not acquire the content necessary for papers and must either forge a paper or choose to compensate in other aspects of the course.

Students pursue tactical multiplication as academic pathfinding based on what destination they seek. This concept builds upon the metaphor of the city used by De Certeau in *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Within the city, there are formalized roads set by strategies and unpaved roads, alleyways, set by tactics (92-93). Continuing this metaphor, all agents are proceeding from one point to a destination. Strategic roadways link powerful institutions directly, but those that are less powerful must take advantage of

these tactical paths, sometimes one after another, or sometimes in conjunction with strategic roadways, in order to arrive at where they need to go. For students, they set courses for success or survival, using tactics, sometimes multiplied sometimes not, as a means to an academic end.

Compliant Student Tactics

Compliant tactics are simply those that agree with or acquiesce to the strategies of more powerful entities (in this study, departments and community partners). These tactics constitute the largest body of all service-learning experiences. The most prevalent tactic used by students was the most basic one: doing their hours. Considering the cost/benefit analysis often present in understanding behavioral relationships, compliant tactics cost the student, but benefit the community partners and the program, as these students are generating work for the community partners and credit hours for the department. This can be a success for the program, as students who aren't making waves in one way or another are contributing to the existence of the program and are supporting the community partner.

This action does have an insidious side, however, when students submit to the unreasonable demands of community partners. One archaeology student, Brady, was supposed to be working on grant writing with a local nonprofit as part of an upper division course. Brady appeared at their site with the complete intention of doing this, but the site supervisor, having had worked with him previously in performing manual labor tasks, decided to reassign Brady to his old job. Brady, not wanting to rock the boat and risk retaliation or having to find a new site for reporting them, simply obliged the site supervisor and did the same thing he did before, but for more hours. As the course Brady

was a part of was an upper-division course and the site experience had been identified previously as connecting with the course curriculum through the grant writing activity, he effectively had his education undermined by the site supervisor to the benefit the organization.

Another example of this is Hank, another archaeology student who complied with an unreasonable demand from a community partner. Hank found himself being the leading student on a project involving serving food to elders. Hank had service-learned at this site the year prior and enjoyed what he did enough to request to be assigned there again. His superiors on site, noting that he had been there previously, assigned him to the task of delivering food to some elderly people along with some of other students. The rest of the students, however, were not adequately informed as to what they needed to do at this site. The other students not only relied on him as a source of information, they essentially foisted their responsibilities for delivering the food upon him, forcing him to do additional work while they slacked off. This experience also serves as an example of the community partner tactic “appointing students as leaders,” which will be discussed later in this paper.

Mixing and Matching

Mixing and matching is a tolerated practice by the department whereby a student splits their hours between multiple sites due to an inability to fulfill all their hours at one place, limited personal availability, or other scheduling problems. As this is not prohibited by the department, this will be considered a compliant rather than subversive tactic because it operates overtly. Service-learning often deals with delving into social circumstances with an intention to understand their complexity and link it back to what’s

being learned in the classroom. These nuances do not appear overnight, especially to largely untrained practitioners who have not so much as gained a rapport with the individuals at their sites. Allowing students to do some of their hours at one site and some at another means that they'll simply get more topical experiences. This can compel them to engage further tactics to make-do, such as fabricating reflections, as these short experiences may not be particularly informative. As such, unless it is specifically intended in the curriculum of a course, it is inadvisable to allow students to mix and match their service-learning experiences to meet hour commitments.

Recycling

Recycling is combining hours for courses in a compliant tactic like mixing and matching. Recycling takes the form of service-learning for two classes at one site (using hours performed at one site for two classes constitutes double-dipping, which is discussed later). In this practice, the service-learner simply does more hours to fulfill added requirements. While technically acceptable, it undermines higher order objectives of service-learning, the expansion of worldview and observation of diversity. Prolonged exposure at sites performing the same activities is unlikely to generate a deeper experience given the experience of respondents who implemented this tactic and the scope of activities performed during most service-learning experiences. During interviews, when recycling was practiced, it was never connected to an expansion or change of activities at a site. As recycling was practiced exclusively at lower division courses, it simply involved spending more time packing lunches or continuing to work at a thrift store. These experiences had little depth to begin with, spending more time doing them helped little to connect to course curriculum.

Avoidant Student Tactics

Avoidant tactics by students are tactics that avoid the work assigned to them by instructors or community partners. Avoidant tactics, in this case, cost the students and department, and potentially community partners. In all the interviews conducted, this was not a confrontational occurrence. Most of the avoidant tactics implemented are undertaken with eye for conservation of effort on the side of the student, who must deal with competing demands of school, life, and potentially work.

Tactical Course Selection

Tactical course selection is potentially the most common avoidant tactic, but it is difficult to determine exactly how many students are engaging in it. Students, who may be working or otherwise involved, select their classes with an eye for conservation of effort. Courses with high engagement, then, may be actively avoided. It is unknown how many students do not take a service course or who drop from courses because of a service requirement.

One example this practice on a group scale is the population of nursing students within Anthropology Department classes. Within the department, there used to be cohorts of nursing students in service-learning courses. These courses fulfilled areas that are essential to graduation for all students, but the scheduling of courses worked well for nursing students, who are also geographically close to the Anthropology Department. Recently, however, there are relatively few nursing students within these courses despite the expansion of the nursing program. Instead, these students have been taking other, easier options for fulfilling requirements, despite nursing faculty presenting at

anthropological conferences on service-learning. With the nursing program being notoriously strenuous, it appears that these students are making-do using tactical course selection.

Freshman Option

One tactic that was mentioned during interviews was the tactic of selecting low investment, easy to complete sites as a method of fulfilling requirements as easily as possible. Vanessa, an anthropology major and senior, referred to this as the “Freshman Option.” For example, sites that are involved in food security and thrift stores tend to act as a Freshman Option due to open scheduling, work that doesn’t require any training or orientation, and low to zero interaction with others. Additionally, sites are often complicit in with the Freshman Option, and formulate strategies for engaging students that capitalizes on students looking for easy hours. This will be discussed later in the investment section of community partners.

Wandering/Slacking

One of the most conspicuous forms of avoidant tactics was wandering. This was simply aimless wandering of service-learners at sites with limited supervision. What is somewhat impressive is the scale of wandering, which sometimes lasted for hours at a time, constituting the bulk of hours that the students needed to complete for their class’s service-learning hours. In one community cleanup, for example, students walked around with rakes and trash bags aimlessly, walking around the area without doing anything. These students were simply looking busy while their peers raked lawns. In another example, students who were assigned to interact with presenters and vendors at a Native

American event instead wandered around, conspicuous because of their bright orange vests.

At this same Native American event, one of the most impressive examples of an avoidant slacking behavior was witnessed by this author. This behavior consisted of two students taking action shots of one another, presented in this vignette:

It was nearing dusk at the Mahkato Wacipi. The area was starting to fill up, with more attendees filtering in from the parking lot and past the white tents housing the vendors to get a seat around the dancing grounds before the grand entry started. Intermittently, students wandered around the grand arena, some talking with their peers, some looking at their phones, other talking with vendors and other attendees. On the southwest side of the common area, between a fry bread vendor and another vendor, two students, clearly identified by wearing their orange volunteer vests, were standing. One student looked around, jumped high, squatted low, held that position, then jumped off to the side, then held that position. The other student filmed him doing all this with his phone. This continued for a few minutes, until they decided to switch roles and the filmer became the filmee. After around ten minutes, the two students stopped taking these action shots and returned to the assembling larger group of volunteers.

These students were appointed to talk to vendors and explore the area by their supervisors at the event. Unfortunately, there were only two supervisors and they spent most of their time directing the students to their various destinations from a camper and were not able to provide much direct supervision. These students displayed arguably the most creative version of slacking witnessed by this author, and drives home how bold students are about slacking within a void of supervision.

Non-Completionism

Mentioned in one interview, non-completionism is taking a course with a service-learning component and simply not doing it. One strength of this research is that the individual who engaged non-completion of service-learning completed the service-

learning component for other courses, allowing them to be identified for an interview, giving some insight to the motivations behind the practice. For most non-completionist students, they do not bother to contact service-learning coordinators, graduate assistants, or professors, they just simply let the deadlines slip by. These students then focus their attentions on other academics, with the hope that their grades in other parts of the class will be strong enough to support a passing grade. In an odd twist of fate with this tactic, professors are unwittingly complicit in this tactic by providing students with extra credit assignments. These assignments allow students to soften the blow from not doing their service component. Professors may not be aware of the sheer scale of their complicity in this when they offer extra credit to students in service-learning courses, and may just chalk up students' low grades to a lack of comprehension of the material. There is a subversive element to non-completion when students petition their professors for extra credit opportunities to enable this behavior.

Glenda, the individual who did not complete a service-learning component for 101 noted that it was not done because she did not live nearby, had family difficulties, and after appeal to the service-learning coordinator, failed to reach a reasonable accommodation. For Glenda, the successful follow-up to the non-completed service-learning experience required her to work specifically with the coordinator to find a project that aligned with her work schedule and life. This project, interestingly, had dramatically more hours than what would have completed the component for the course. Since the project in question connected more directly to her personal interests and family needs, she still pursued it.

Subversive tactics are tactics that subvert the process of service-learning to benefit the student. These subversions are done sometimes in collaboration with the site and community partner at a cost to the department through undermining of the curriculum. These subversions range from embellishment in reflection papers to fabrication of hours worked.

Double-Dipping

Service-learning at sites you already volunteer at is a tactic that is often attempted by students, which I will refer to as “double-dipping,” pursuant to the discussion in Schalge and Pajunen (2016). Students will come to instructors and graduate assistants to request if they can service-learn at sites to which they are already obligated. These hours, then, are being counted twice. The department has a preselected list of service-learning sites to reduce the likelihood of this occurring. This is unintentional, as the site selections were made to facilitate connections to curriculum. However, as mentioned in the discussion of Glenda’s service, there is some leeway with site selection for students based on their needs and schedule. Students can take advantage of this and double-dip if they do not disclose that they are already serving somewhere.

One example would be the experience of Marjorie. Marjorie was already volunteering with a nearby LGBT organization, and successfully petitioned the coordinator to consider this organization as her site for service-learning. This, in of itself, constituted the tactic of recycling, but Marjorie then had the supervisor sign off for service-learning hours. Thus, the hours she was investing at the site were counted twice, fulfilling both a prior volunteer requirement and the hours for service-learning. It is unclear whether the coordinator was aware that the student was double-dipping. Fortunately, the

activities did, in fact, connect with the curriculum, but the lack of a novel experience means that the student did not expand their horizons and did not gain the deeper understanding of social issues that was an identified goal of the service-learning program.

Signing-Off

This tactic is the practice of signing-off on hours that have not been completed. In this tactic, disinterested or unsupportive community partners, will fulfill requests to sign-off hours made by students without ensuring they performed the hours. While no respondent indicated that they engaged in this practice, they observed others doing it. The act was suggested by multiple respondents who were involved with a food packaging program, who noted that the individuals responsible for signing-off on hours were other students, who were not particularly inclined to patrol their peers. This usually occurs at sites with lower investment practices, as will be discussed later.

Fabricating Reflections

During interviews, students mentioned several times that they basically made up their reflections. While these individuals may have spent the time and done the work at the sites, but they may not have had the connections to the course curriculum to facilitate the writing up of an actual reflection. Instead, they pieced together a reflection based upon what they thought was desired by the instructor. This tactic may involve a wholly fabricated reflection or it may simply be an embellishment of their experience at a site. It is sometimes applied defensively for students that suffer reassignment or negative outcomes from a site. As students have less power than sites, there is little they can do beyond informing the department of an unethical site and, in doing so, risk invalidating

hours worked. These students then engage in this tactic out of necessity and a desire to simply cut their losses.

There is a bias to make things seem positive when it comes to the writing of reflections that compels this. Going, again, back to the situation of the reassignment, if Hank wrote about how he was reassigned and did not do what was necessary would not have benefitted him. Instead, it raises many questions regarding what he should have done and lumps more work upon him. As mentioned above, students are attempting to be economical with their time regarding service-learning, so fabricating a reflection is the easiest option available to Hank and one least likely to draw consequences down upon him. After all, who is more likely to be believed? A student or a community partner?

There are greater consequences for this type of making-do being implemented. Reflection papers not only act as a form of accountability for students, but also for sites. In the absence of formal review of sites, the reading of reflection papers by service-learning coordinators and professors is what ensures that the opportunities provided by sites are connecting to curricular objectives. By improvising a reflection when curricular objectives are not met or when a student is subject to unethical practices, it undermines the quality of service-learning within a course and enables unethical behavior, leading to more tactics and greater damage to the program.

Meta-education of Service-learners

Crucial to challenging the implementation of tactics by service-learners is meta-education. Continuing the metaphor of academic pathfinding seen above, meta-education is a map that depicts for students the potential destinations they may reach and routes

they may take. Students may not understand the learning objectives they are working toward in regards to service-learning and so, constrained by external demands and compelled by internal desires, may pursue paths that undermine themselves, the program, and community partners. These same students usually have a declared major and an idea of what they want to do as a career, but they may not have an idea of how their learning in a service-learning experience is a route to the destinations they desire.

The idea of meta-education supports earlier scholarship by this author and others that recommended that “clear definitions and objectives for service-learning are necessary for consistently beneficial outcomes for service-learners. These definitions need to be repeatedly emphasized throughout the course by the professor to ensure that students are aware of them” (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2013). While, over time, repeated course experiences with service-learning might lead to an understanding of how service-learning should function and connect, most students in Anthropology Department courses are taking these courses to fulfill general education requirements. These students may not have repeated exposures to service-learning. In order to ensure that these students are able to relate course objectives and the service-learning, these connections should be made explicit. Lower level students especially can benefit. Doing this does require professors or graduate assistants to take time away from the lecture curriculum to emphasize the service-learning curriculum. An extension of this is ensuring that all instructors are familiar with course objectives and how they relate to service-learning. It is easy to say that students who are working in a thrift shop will come into contact with diverse populations, listen to what the community partner says, and call it a day. The

actual practice of service-learning is far muddier and entails delving into community-departmental relations, as will be discussed in the next chapter.

The suggestion to meta-educate students, in not so many words, was suggested by Marjorie, a sophomore art major. Marjorie specifically mentioned bringing students together during recitations or breakaway sessions during lecture and having a discussion regarding what they were doing at sites. This would be done to facilitate making connections between the service-learning and the curriculum. As an added benefit, this could help students stay on track regarding deadlines, transportation, and other supportive factors necessary for successful service-learning experiences.

This process was attempted by a service-learning coordinator, Carolyn, during her dual tenure as service-learning coordinator and recitation instructor. Carolyn said it was difficult to accomplish due to the pacing of the deadlines and her workload. The connections were positive, but ultimately the service-learning program was pared back, removing service-learning from Introduction to Anthropology. As a practice, I would not recommend this be done at large unless there was a very explicit effort made by faculty to ensure the proper structuring of the check-ins within the recitation curriculum and proper training of the recitation instructors to ensure they understood how service-learning ought to work as well as it should be connected to the course.

In upper division courses, where the content of the course is effectively embodied by service-learning, it is less necessary for the professor to make these connections explicitly. This not only because of this connectedness of upper division projects, but because more learned students have the meta-education necessary to make the connections themselves. Within the sample, all of the upper-division students had taken a

lower level course with a service-learning component. Of the 14 students who had taken the Introduction to Anthropology course at MNSU and a higher-level Anthropology course, only one responded that no courses made a connection to the curriculum, suggesting that the scaffolding model may aid in understanding *how* to connect service-learning to the curriculum.

CHAPTER VI: COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Community partners, despite their centrality in the enterprise of service-learning, are an understudied group. In contrast to most other studies, this analysis examines community partners using a combination of organizational theory, an analysis of service-learning tactics and strategies, and a consideration of community partner investment in service-learners. This last point is depicted on a continuum, going from low to high investment, detailing attributes of each extreme with most falling in the middle.

Organizational Relationships

As mentioned above, the Mankato community is not especially large. Yet the university has an enrollment of 15,000 students, with 68% of seniors polled responding they have done service-learning (NSSE Pocket Guide 2015). This abundant supply of volunteer labor affects community partners several ways. The university becomes a preferred partner because of the large supply of labor it can mobilize and the consistency can offer. Other sources of volunteers, then, become lower priority for volunteer coordinators to court. “The relative number of alternatives available, as well as the size or importance of these alternatives, has consequences for the extent to which organizational behavior is constrained” (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 50). As there are few alternatives that can supply such a volume of a critical resource, the university can constrain the behavior of community partners severely, and impact their behavior even if a given organization does not pair with the university. This discretionary control over service-learners combined with their necessity for community partners, plus the lack of an ability to resist or mobilize alternative sources of labor, leads to a condition where the university wields significant influence over the non-profits in the area (53).

This leads to a situation where each of the volunteer organizations are participating in a “quasi-market” of volunteers, with the university selecting programs based on how well they align with its goals and initiatives (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 36). These conditions of uncertainty and dependence leads the community partners to engage in acts of compliance in order to placate the university and ensure consistent labor. The authors define compliance as “a loss of discretion, a constraint, and an admission of limited autonomy” (94-95). Complying with the university demands, like aligning programming schedule to the academic calendar, is a way to ensure consistent labor for growing programs. Additionally, agreeing to be interviewed by members of the university for this study is an act of compliance. These acts of compliance occur at a cost to the organization initially, but ideally improve relations and elicit a greater investment from the university.

While community partners are able to exercise some control over university departments through the control over service-learning positions, the asymmetry of the power relations means that departments can simply shop around to find another partner that agrees with them. By working with the department to design service-learning components of courses as suggested by Eyler (2002, 526), community partners have a seat at the table for negotiations, potentially with some control over the demands placed on them by the department. Pfeffer and Salancik (2003, 100) note that this professionalization and self-regulation makes sense as the community partners are more knowledgeable than the department regarding their programs. This practice connects to core ideas regarding the structuring of service-learning, with it representing a partnership between the academy and the community. Community partners are not the only party

which may benefit from this deference, however. Implementation of advanced research projects require this type of collaboration with community partners to identify areas of study and work for students and faculty. Lastly, by giving some legitimate control to community partners over service-learning, they may be less inclined to engage in deceptive tactics for some semblance of control over their own programming.

To recap, the growth of community partners requires labor provided by service-learners. Once connections with the university have been made and a community partner has complied to the university, they quickly become dependent upon the university. Their dependency can be seen through their relationships with the university, built at the expense of alternative relationships with the community. Becoming a service-learning partner with the department may be driven by this dependency. This may be done honestly, with an honest interest in working with students in that manner, or it may be a way to relabel volunteerism as service-learning in a tactic. This is done through a process of concealment and keeping service-learners happy enough that they do not report it to the broader university. This process of concealment itself is a tactic to reduce the potential influence the department would exert upon this inconsistency (Pfeffer and Salancik 2003, 104).

Community Partner Tactics

As mentioned earlier, community partners are lower in power than the university, but may engage in tactics that subvert the power of the university. On the other hand, strategies implemented by the university result in shifts in the available volunteer labor pool, sometimes necessitating community partners use of tactics to run their programs.

Within this research, three community partner tactics were observed: courting of departments, courting of students, and rebranding.

Courting of Departments

Community partners are not passive entities that wait for the university regarding service-learning. Community partners can actively court various departments to find service-learners or to find the best fit for their programs. This usually occurs overtly, with community organizations and department discussing their needs, wants, and desires with one another to determine goodness-of-fit between programs, courses, and professors. It can, however, also occur covertly, with community partners shopping around for departments to supply service-learners.

The more overt method can have a deceptive element as well, the cooption of department members for community partner boards and advisory councils. Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) describe the utility of this practice: “members of the controlling organization are invited to participate in various activities of the vulnerable organization. . . the aim of bringing in potentially hostile outsiders is to socialize them and to commit them to provide assistance to the focal organization.” (110). The effect of successfully implementing this practice can be seen following one women’s organization cooption of a department faculty member and a graduate student. This community partner became a partner of choice for the duration of these relationships, and was well-represented in student interviews. Additionally, this organization acquired excellent knowledge of service-learning within the department. This knowledge was later used to maneuver around the department and court a different department without the Anthropology Department’s knowledge.

One community partner tactic not foreseen by the department was the active maneuvering of a community partner to find service-learners after they experienced a shortfall. The previously mentioned women's organization, once a devoted partner of the Anthropology Department, experienced a decline in the available service-learners one semester due to a change in engagement practice within the department. This placed heavy stresses upon the organization as they had grown their programs along with the availability of students provided by the anthropology department. To counteract this, the organization's volunteer coordinator, Shirley, started discussions with the Nursing Department at MNSU to obtain a more reliable supply of volunteers. Remarkably, despite Shirley's many connections to the Anthropology Department and years of interaction with it, the negotiations went unnoticed. This impressive bit of information control was essential to prevent the department from divesting from the relationship before the organization was ready. This epitomizes Pfeffer and Salancik's (2003) description of information control as "an important mechanism for both the exercise and the avoidance of influence." (106) Within a semester of this courting, the Nursing Department had become the partner of choice for the organization, despite their programs emphasis on interacting with diverse peoples and cultures. This organization ended up having fewer places for Anthropology students than it used to, forcing the department to direct students to lower-quality partners.

Through the lens of resource dependence theory, this was an astonishing success. The vastly asymmetric power relationship between this small non-profit and the university was circumvented through the university's decentralized approach towards service-learning. As the department, like most others, was seeking service-learners as an

independent body, this flipped the relationship, making the department compete with other departments for limited spots. This drives home that, while Minnesota State University has an enormous presence within the city of Mankato, the university is not a monolith.

Courting of Students

Acting as “The Freshman Option” for students may be a part of a larger tactic to solicit participation by students. Being known among students as the easy option acts as a sort of word-of-mouth marketing, attracting students who want to get service-learning done as easily as possible. This courting can go so far as writing-off hours that service-learners did not do and consider non-working hours as service-learning hours, as will be discussed later. This tactic is unique among community partner tactics as it may be done in active collusion with students against the university.

Rebranding

One of the most prevalent tactics seen at sites was a simple one: a rebranding of volunteer activities as service-learning activities. These experiences had mixed outcomes. Many were shallow experiences that did not meet curricular objectives and required students to fabricate, or at least embellish, reflections. Oftentimes these experiences took the form of manual labor tasks like packing meals, stocking shelves, cleaning yards, usually done with limited or no contact with the recipients of services. In earlier research (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2013), it was suggested that these experiences simply fell short due to a lack of connection with people. During the writing of the earlier work, it was never considered that this was manipulative. Unfortunately, considering more recent

experiences, it becomes clear that this is a tactic that is a part of a larger strategy of low investment that will be discussed later.

One particularly deceptive group of sites did not attempt to tailor their experience to the curriculum of service-learners at all. Crucial to this, these sites had to maintain a ruse of interest in service-learning during the process of site selection. One food shelf maintained a connection with the department only to inform it of their open positions for service-learners. This site was notoriously hard to get a hold of when it came to contact by professors for any other matter and avoided repeated contact attempts for this project. Superficial responses were made by the site, but nothing was ever followed through, suggesting avoidance by the site. This extreme example was not representative of most of the sites implementing rebranding, however.

Interestingly, rebranding, while a tactic and sometimes a deceptive practice by community partners, did work in several examples. One of the programs rebranded had a set, nationally-supported, curriculum for volunteers and had some of the best outcomes. These were higher investment sites that tended to be associated with intensive experiences that require some training. To utilize service-learners within these programs, service-learners had to be trained and follow a curriculum that defined every interaction between service-learners and clients. These experiences were still technically rebranding because the programs still functioned identically with volunteers as they did with service-learners. The following vignette depicts one of these successful rebranding experiences as observed by this author:

The finish line of the 5k was full of people. The friends, families, and supporters of the at-risk girls who were participating in the race were gathered around finish line waiting for the runners to come in. The first few runners, some of the adults

that ran the race to run the race, ran past the finish line. Shortly after, the first of the coaches runs past the finish line. This coach's girls distantly trail him, and they meet up minutes later by the side of the crowd.

One of the girls Brady was mentoring crosses the line. He's not with her, however. Instead, he crosses the line towards the middle of the pack, running alongside one of the girls that needed the most support. Throughout the race, he has been running back and forth between them, speeding up and slowing down, in order to run with them all, but still letting them run at their best pace.

Calvin, like many of the other coaches, brought his girls together and ran with them all at the same time. He is barely winded at the conclusion of the race, but he's not running the race for him. They hug each other and do one of the chants they've rehearsed since the beginning of the program. Shortly after the chant, Calvin's group joins Brady's and they chat together until the end of the event.

Within this scene, each of these coaches were service-learning for the same program. We see three different approaches towards the actual running of the 5k race they had been training the girls for. Yet, leading up to that point, the curriculum they had been working on was virtually identical. All coaches did the same training with their girls per the same schedule. Each of the coaches spent an hour each week coaching their girls in running to build their self-esteem and serve as role models. This program has specified activities for each session, breaking it down to specific motivational chants that the girls and their coaches do on a session-by-session basis. Despite some coaches choosing to pursue their own best time in the race, choosing to let their girls choose their best time, or running all together to share support, they all end up at the same finish line. The shared curriculum of the program they participated in removed many uncertainties and made it explicit what potential service-learners would be getting into. Despite this program completely eschewing the recommendation for development of service-learning

components with faculty, this program has had a remarkably high rate of connections to course curriculum for students, as will be discussed later in this document.

Community Partner Strategies

Community partners sit in the middle in terms of power relations. While they are subject to the strategies of the university, they also implement their own strategies upon students, who respond with tactics. The strategies implemented by community partners discussed in this study are service and learning, appointment of students as leaders, reassignment of students, and signing-off. These strategies represent not only ways to manage the labor of service-learners, but to control dependency within their environment.

Service and Learning

This type of strategy benefits the community organization, but occurs at a cost to the department in the quality of the experience provided to students. Service and learning sites involved a division of the hours students completed between informational sessions and hours spent conducting activities that benefitted the event. The informational sessions were mini-classes or speakers related to the events where service-learners were participating. The actual work that students were doing took the form of directing parking, helping food vendors, or making and serving lunches. Essentially, this results in a hodge-podge where a student is alternating between classroom learning and simply doing service, with the student not learning experientially. The brevity of the shifts combined with the canned discussions and classes leads to a situation where some learning does occur, but it does not ultimately connect to course curriculum. What is most surprising of this strategy is that it managed to successfully fly under the radar for years.

Not only that, but the community partner received some assistance from faculty in recruiting students to do it.

Appointment of Students as Leaders

This activity occurs at a significant cost to the student, but works to the benefit of community partners. One interviewee, Helen, reported being appointed to do this, but it was also observed by other students who were interviewed at locations where students oversaw signing-off hours. At these locations, multiple accounts of signing-off occurred by students. Hypothetically, in both instances, the students receive some leadership experience, but during the interview, Helen simply seemed exhausted from having to coordinate tens of students and unhelpful community partners. I was fortunate enough to observe Helen as an appointed leader, presented in this vignette:

It was a cool day in October during the community cleanup. We had gathered at the appointed time in the free lot of the school and awaited our assignment. New students showed up and asked if we were the raking group, joining us after their confusion had subsided. We all awaited the arrival of the rakes that our supervisor, Helen, was attempting to procure from the organization we were working for. None of us knew exactly where we were going to do the raking and there were questions circulated regarding what kind of transportation solution we'd need. We were told it was close enough to walk, however. Finally, Helen returned with some rakes and let the students know where they were going: literally across the street. No one was quite sure why everyone gathered in the middle of a parking lot when the place where work was taking place was so close.

Upon arrival at the site, students were split up into groups by a supervisor from the non-profit, given some rakes and bags, and sent along to rake. Actual coordination between the groups was done by Helen. Helen would stop by and ask if anything was needed, acquire supplies, and bring them to groups. This was quite a problem because, due to the lack of coordination from the non-profit beforehand, there was a shortage of essential items such as rakes and bags to put leaves in. When a group had concluded their raking, she would reassign them to help another group get their yard done. All this walking and a lack of supervision from the group signing off the hours meant that if service-learners wanted, they could just slack off and still get their hours signed off. One duo did, going so far

as to spend hours simply walking around the neighborhood holding bags and rakes that could have been applied to one of the houses that needed them.

At the conclusion of the three and a half hours of work, we were assembled in a larger area and the non-profit leader congratulated the students. Five hours were signed off on the sheets, as that was the anticipated work time combined with attendance at a chili cook-off at a local church as a reward for helping.

Attendance was not required at the cook-off, however, and most simply went back to their homes. No transportation was provided to the cook-off, so many could not attend had they wanted to.

The community partner had many homes to take care for that event and desired closer supervision of service-learners. In order to facilitate this, the community partner appointed Helen as the liaison between the students and the organization, despite the presence of a service-learning coordinator within the department and even at the site in question at the same time. Helen's position was not done as an upper-division course and her service-learning experience dramatically exceeded the number of hours she needed to do for her courses. In her interview, at no point did she indicate that she sought out such a burden and it appears as if the community partner identified her and placed the coordination upon her as a means of saving their labor.

Reassignment of students

In another example of a student being subjected to a strategy of community partners, Brady, the anthropology student who had also participated in the 5k, was reassigned in his tasks at another site. At this site, Brady was approved by the department to do grant writing for an upper division class, but was reassigned to a manual labor position. While Brady was specifically noted by the site coordinator to be a "good worker" and was perceived favorably by the site supervisor, Brady's academic needs

were of no consequence to the supervisor. Not wanting to rock the boat, he went along with this. With the difference of power between community partners and students, the ability for Brady to resist this type of change was limited. Timelines had to be met for him to complete his requisite hours. Instead, Brady was compelled by the strategy not only to do a task he hadn't agreed to, but to fabricate his reflection to make academic ends meet, serving as an example of vertical multiplication.

Signing-off

As mentioned above, a strategy that was implemented was signing-off on students' hours without completion. Key to this idea is the marketing of the specific service as an easy one, catering to students implementing an avoidant strategy towards service-learning. Knowledge of this ease of service may have been spread via word-of-mouth by students, helping these sites bolster their ranks. Vanessa, the respondent who coined the term "Freshman Option," noted at one site she worked at that "there was a lot of people that just got those hours signed off on and may not have necessarily done them." The actual signing-off was also performed by students, possibly work study, who were appointed by the community partner to act as supervisors for service-learners, an example of multiple strategies being implemented at one site.

While it is troubling that students are having their hours signed off without completing them by students appointed as leaders, it is more troubling when it is done by community partners themselves. This researcher observed one instance where this occurred. More troubling, the service-learning coordinator and a professor from the department were both present during this. This type of indifference exemplified the

growing apathy within the department towards service-learning, and a harbinger of the program cuts to come.

Community Partner Investment Continuum

Within community partner interviews and observations, it became clear that there were a variety of different levels that community partners were willing to invest in service-learners. The level of investment of community partners appears to be connected to the work being done by community partners. Positions that require training or commitment are associated with higher investment by community partners. On the other side of the continuum, lower investment sites can be staffed by virtually anyone, and tend not to invest much in students.

Higher Investment Strategies

Higher investment strategies are community partner strategies that require a greater investment in time or resources for the community partner and students who service-learn at their site. These programs often required committed, semi-trained service-learners based on their content, and tend to be avoided by Introduction to Anthropology students. To ensure commitment from students and provide some measure of training, higher investment strategies often involve an orientation. Additionally, to help ensure a reliable supply of these students from the department, volunteer coordinators often invest time coordinating and courting department representatives. This can be a very demanding proposal for them, which may contribute to burnout.

One hallmark of higher investment strategies are orientations for service-learners. Orientations are a time-consuming means of ensuring better outcomes for community

partners and the groups they serve. These orientations are usually small classes where community partners gather their service-learners to discuss what it is they will be doing and how they will be doing it. As orientations occur beyond the scope of regular hours, they impose an additional cost on service-learners. This has a strategic quality for community partners, who can then weed out the less-devoted from working with vulnerable populations such as immigrants, children, and the disabled.

Associated with orientations and higher investment strategies are longer hourly commitments. Girls on the Run specifically requires any service-learner to engage in a contract and see the whole program out, with most students exceeding the number of hours they need for given a class. Like orientations, this requirement may compel less motivated students to avoid these sites, leading to the cohort of service-learners present being especially experientially-oriented. Perhaps because of this or maybe due to the direct interaction with the girls, not a single negative experience was reported of the program.

On the other hand, while these investment strategies can lead to some positive outcomes for students, they can be very demanding on community partners. Gretchen, a long-time community partner and an excellent collaborator with the service-learning program, eventually resigned her position due to the imposed demands of work and her growing family. During interviews, she noted several instances where specific upper-division courses were found to be problematic due to students not fulfilling their obligations. While these did not specifically cause her to resign her position, they were mentioned as a frustration that added to existing frustrations.

Lower Investment Strategies

In contrast, lower investment strategies treat students like replaceable parts, requiring low hourly commitments, and have little interaction with others on site. One respondent noted that much of the work being done in the name of engagement now is of this type and referred to it as “service light”. This work is short and not particularly connected to curriculum. Within the university, this type of work often serves the purpose of fulfilling required service commitments, as it does for international students and Greek organizations. Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) see this style of interaction as being advantageous to community partners in the right circumstances: “Given that the organization’s vulnerability derives from dependence on single exchanges, the most direct solution is to develop an organization which is dependent on a variety of exchanges and less dependent on any single exchange” (109). Through relying on a variety of shortly appointed students, the interchangeability of students in these programs allows the community partner to court a wide variety of departments and students, reducing their dependence on any one source of labor.

Relations to Course Curriculum by Investment Strategy

As mentioned throughout the discussion of the investment continuum, certain programs and sites tend to fall towards one side or the other of the continuum. Within this research, it was noted that food security organizations (organization where students are packing lunches for others) and thrift stores tended towards the low end of investment strategies. In contrast, students working with public schools and programs through the local YWCA had higher investment by the community partner. Figure 6 depicts these

programs, the number of course experiences for these programs, and the number of relations to course material experienced at these sites.

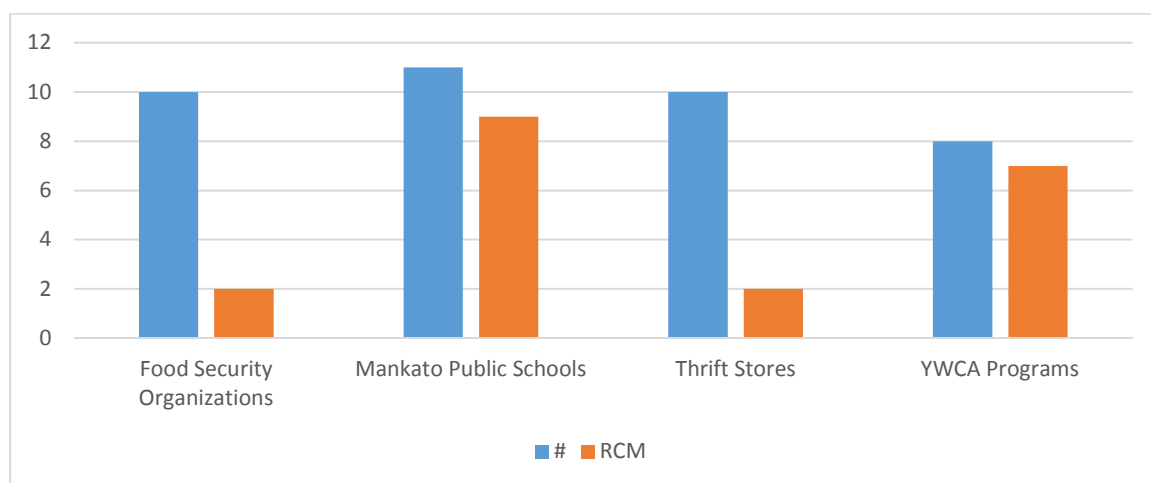


Figure 6. Relations to Course Material by site type

Looking at figure 6, we see that the lower investment sites of food security organizations and thrift stores are markedly lower in connections to course material, with both sites only have 20% of students making connection to course material. Both of these types of sites were notorious for rebranding. Food security organizations were suggested to engage in signing off hours and employing students in supervisory capacities.

In regards to the higher investment sites, Mankato Public Schools and YWCA programs have high percentages of connections to course curriculum. Students participating in Mankato Public Schools programs made connections 82% of the time and YWCA programs 87.5% of the time. True to higher investment sites, these groups of sites required significant hourly commitments and had more face-to-face contact. YWCA programs required an orientation, but many of the public-school programs did not. Unfortunately, despite these successes, these two groups of sites reduced their interaction

with the department. Despite the good outcome for students, departmental relations and changing bureaucratic demands proved the end of these collaborations.

CHAPTER VII: INSTITUTIONAL CONNECTIONS

The highest level of analysis considered by this thesis is the relationship between community partners and the department. This relationship is often considered simply, with faculty taking what community partners say at face value, a relationship that subtly depicts the power relations between the university and the community. This section specifically considers what is understood by faculty and community partners, community and departmental relations, and the process of consideration of sites for service-learning.

Common Understanding

It might seem cliché to state, but what is understood by stakeholders is not necessarily held in common, and what is held in common is often not understood. Throughout the interviews, it was clear that not everyone who was being interviewed had the same definition of what, exactly, service-learning was. This was referred to in earlier research as “common understanding” and has persisted in every subsequent level of research as a theme (Schalge, Skinner, and Pajunen 2013). Establishing a common understanding and articulating clear objectives were identified by Kecskes (2006) as key characteristics of engaged departments. Yet within our student body, department, and university, there was significant confusion as to what service-learning was and how it differed from volunteering, service, or other forms of community engagement. Of course, as discussed earlier, some community partners may have been aware of what service-learning was, they simply chose to ignore it to fulfill their needs. Within the sites, there were different understandings of what exactly service-learning was. Even within a single site, volunteer coordinators may have been on board, but the site coordinators might not

have understood the differences between service-learning and volunteering, as will be discussed later.

Meta-education of Faculty

While sites are often considered for leafletting of service-learning material, faculty could benefit from some meta-education regarding service-learning as well. Not every faculty member is fluent in service-learning. Understandings of service-learning and engagement may vary between faculty even within the same department. These differences were evident in how professors taught the same class and the positioning of service-learning within the class. While the overarching purpose and point value of service-learning within the course remained the same, its importance in lectures and other materials varied. For some professors, service-learning was discussed in lectures, but for others, they deferred to the department coordinator, a graduate teaching assistant, for all matters service-learning.

As the professor is central in the classroom, a professor familiar with the learning objectives and method of service-learning can carry this understanding to the widest group of people. Moreover, professors are the most powerful of all the parties involved in service-learning, and their example will carry the most weight. Professorial influence can be direct, through the overt discussion of connections to course curriculum suggested earlier, or it can be indirect, such as directing students to sites that are better fits for a given course. Regardless of which way influence is imparted, the professor remains the only constituent where it can be certain that there is an understanding of service-learning.

Recalling the class breakdown of connections to course material, Anthropology 230, Language and Culture, was the class with the largest amount of connections made. At the time of this research, this class was taught exclusively by the faculty member most familiar with service-learning. While there are too many variables to suggest that this exclusively was the factor for the statistically significant number of connections to course material, the influence of this knowledge is likely to have had some effect.

Community and Departmental Relations

The process of selecting community partners is crucial to maintaining quality of service-learning within the department. It might be assumed that having cordial connections to community partners is the way to ensure good outcomes. However, looking at the case of Brady's reassignment, that organization had good relations with the department. The department chair regularly interacted with the volunteer coordinator of the site, who was familiar with service-learning and anthropology.

Additionally, one of the cases of wandering and writing-off hours occurred at a site where a professor was present. In fact, the site in question was selected by the faculty member as an integral part of an upper-division course, even though it was simply a manual labor, service task. As mentioned above, when the community partner announced that the students would be receiving hours beyond what they had worked, the professor was standing nearby and clearly heard it. Giving the benefit of the doubt, perhaps this was a part of a more complex arrangement between the faculty and the site for a specific upper-division course being taught.

Tragically, despite these close relationships, community partners were not deterred from engaging in practices that undermined the curriculum for students. Having good connections within the community does allow for faculty or graduate students to observe sites and students at sites. This rapport will allow for community partners to let their guard down as well, to allow for better research.

Tailoring projects

Higher level courses require more work to maintain connection to the curriculum, as they talk about more specific topics and in a more substantial manner. To facilitate this connection, faculty will work with community partners to create curriculum that meets the needs of a specific course based on the desires and needs of the community partner. This practice was recommended by Eyler (2002, 528) as a means of easing the process of reflection and connecting coursework to service-learning.

In practice, despite the connection between faculty and community partners, this has had mixed results. Within one of the interviews, Jonas, a senior in the department, had a strongly negative experience from a service-learning experiencing in an upper-division course on gender with a community partner that had a personal relationship with a faculty member and had collaborated with a faculty member in creating the project in question. The research project Jonas was working on for the course was undermined the community partner in question and had to be repeatedly changed, to the point where the final research project presentation was aborted. The partner in question was unreliable, difficult to get a hold of, and difficult to work with. Despite this, due to the way the

service-learning was fully integrated into the coursework, he still managed to connect it to the course curriculum.

On the same project, Carl had a very positive experience working on grant writing. The grant-writing skills learned by Carl were surely marketable and he felt he had learned a lot. Yet, as this experience did not actual expose Carl to working with the population he was grant-writing for, any understanding of their situation was second-hand at best. While the course concepts were likely still somewhere present in the grant-writing, this distance between Carl and the people served by the organization challenges how much learning was being done through this service. This experience also raises questions as to how accurately students can determine where or if connections to curriculum are made.

Another example of the uncertain origin of connections to course curriculum comes from Billy, an anthropology graduate student who was reflecting upon his experience service-learning at a local school. He had a good experience service-learning with the kids there as a part of his Language and Culture class, and even continued to volunteer beyond his hours. Yet, he claimed that the connections to the course curriculum were made entirely by himself. Given Billy's opinion of service-learning during his interview, it is also possible he said he made the connections himself out of stubbornness. As in any class, the experience was structured to allow him to make these connections. The impact of structured projects may not be overt, and considering students as a group is necessary to determine how well tailoring is working.

Established Curriculum Service Programs

Within the results from sites, some of the most consistently good outcomes came from programs connected with national organizations with a set curriculum. An advantage of this is that with a set curriculum of service for learners, whether the experience would connect to course curriculum was far easier to discern for faculty. Further elaborated, there is no question what students would be doing, how they'd be doing it, or who they'd be doing it with: they're all determined by the national organization. As an added bonus for using these programs, the relationship between national and local organizations acts as a safeguard against manipulative tactics by community partners. If there was a significant deviation from how the experience was practiced, the local organization would jeopardize their support from the national one.

An example of this comes from the vignette where two male, veteran, non-traditional students worked with a girls' empowerment race. Despite their markedly different background from their clients, they managed to have connect their experiences to course curriculum, serve the community, and were observed having fun with the girls. While these men might not have been able to bridge the gap organically, as neither were parents, the structured curriculum and defined expectations and set guidelines for what they needed to do. In the absence of such structure, it seems unlikely that they would have been able to have such an experience.

Site Consideration

There is not a simple, one-step, solution to ensuring that any given site will be a good fit. Key to site selection should be site visits by faculty prior to accepting them as a community partner. This is necessary, as sites have been shown to repeatedly engage in deceptive practices to elicit service-learner support for their programs. Looking at the results of service-learning for the various constituents, I agree with Moore's (1981, 297) suggestion that the best means of determining site involves participant-observation. He describes the value of this as follows:

In this case, a broader ethnographic description of the placement site provided more comprehensive information for an analysis of the place as a learning environment than would task analysis alone, whether the data were about the images that participants had of themselves and their work, professional customers and practices, or collective ideologies. These ethnographic accounts reveal much about what the tasks mean in context, about the commitments and motivations of members, and about the way people and events fit together." (Moore 1981, 297)

Through participant-observation, an authentic understanding of what will be done at a site can be established, without nearly the same risk of tactics by community partners as when students are performing their service-learning. Unfortunately, this is difficult for upper-division courses with high-hour commitments at internship-style experiences. The significant depth of experience is unlikely to be understood through a short-term observation. Instead, the tailoring method combined with structured reflection by students is recommended.

One additional consideration in site placement is the level of face-to-face interaction between students and community members. Roldan, Strage, and David (2004, 46) suggested this to be an important factor for positive student outcomes. Within this thesis research, Philip, who was involved in preparing meals for a non-profit, also

suggested this as a way for students to make connections. This can be a complex request, however. Considering the needs of community partners, it seems less viable for these short-term commitments to be engaged in such face-to-face scenarios. Handling money, being responsible for delivering of core services, etc., requires a level of trust and familiarity not possessed by most service-learners. These positions would require longer hourly commitments, which are coincidentally, also suggested by the above authors to result in better student outcomes (46). Even without increasing the hours of service, the assistance of these tasks could probably be done with little negative consequence. This might require more administrative overhead and collaboration between instructors and community partners, but might be helpful as a stopgap for sites that are planning to expand their usage of service-learners.

In one final site note, it is important to note that instructors often do not communicate directly with the site supervisor. Instead, instructors communicate with volunteer coordinators or other representatives of organizations. While these individuals may be familiar with the pedagogy of service-learning, site supervisors may not be. Site supervisors may just be volunteers who understand service solely in the context of volunteering. This could explain why a site supervisor was so willing to reassign Brady from his assigned task, as service-learning was not even on their radar. Ideally, this situation could be repaired through the circulation of materials regarding service-learning, however with how busy community partners are and the levels of communication involved, it is unlikely these materials would get down to where they are needed.

Representation of Service-Learning

Service-learning is intended to be a pedagogy that spans the gap between the academy and community. Considering the importance of community-based connections for finding employment for students, soliciting gifts to the university, and justifying budgets, this practical pedagogy is often symbolically underrepresented within the institution.

Lower-level courses constitute the bulk of service-learning hours produced for the university. While upper-division courses have higher hour requirements, they cannot replace the sheer number of students out working in the community in the name of the university for lower-level courses. Undergraduate students doing simple tasks, then, becomes the public face of service-learning in the community. These students are the least informed, but most prevalent form of service-learner seen by community partners, driving down the perceived value of using service-learners in programming.

Within lower-level courses, incorporation of service-learning within the curriculum is loose, yet the experience had by students is supposed to stand for itself as an exemplar of course material. Connections made to course curriculum in these contexts can and does occur, but the lack of meta-education and discussion of service-learning within the course sends a message to students that service-learning is, as mentioned in interviews, “tacked on to the syllabus.”

Additionally, *who* discusses service-learning is important. The classroom is a hierarchical setting with professors sitting at the top, with students on the bottom, and graduate assistants and community partners somewhere in the middle. Therefore, when professors discuss something, it is likely to be considered of higher importance than if another party talks about it. For the students to be best educated as to the value of service-

learning in a course, it needs to be discussed by professors directly as a component of the curriculum, as it often is in upper-division courses. In effect, by offloading the responsibility of service-learning coordination to a graduate student, the department is deemphasizing it, and indicating that it is, in fact, an addition to the curriculum rather than an integral part of it.

CHAPTER VIII: CONCLUSIONS

The connection between pedagogy, partnership, and practice is a complex one. To ensure quality outcomes for all parties, there are some considerations to be made: engage in meta-education of students and faculty, ensure site placements connect to curriculum, and be aware of potential tactical maneuvering by both sites and students.

Students may not appreciate the ideals of a liberal arts education represented by general education curriculum. While this curriculum is crafted by administrators and faculty to shape students into informed citizens, skilled practitioners, or successful career-seekers, students often lack the experience and perspective necessary to fully appreciate this. It is for this reason that meta-education, educating students (and others) about education and how it relates to their future selves, is critical for not only service-learning, but the success of the whole of the educational enterprise.

Of all the groups, faculty represent the best group to be meta-educated. Faculty are the only group where knowledge of service-learning can be sure to be understood. This understanding of service-learning is then imparted upon students through meta-educational discussions and upon both students and community partners during the crafting and implementation of service-learning programs. Moreover, the importance of professors within the educational hierarchy means that simply by virtue of their status, such discussions will have greater impact than any other party. Faculty, then not only touch more parties than any other group, but they also do so with greater impact, making their meta-education doubly important.

For departments, it is essential that service-learning is meaningfully implemented within courses. Sites need to be selected based on their alignment to the curriculum, based on the actual activities that students will be engaged in, and not based exclusively on personal relationships with community organizations. Even with this process of selection, impressions of how sites function cannot be ossified. An ethnographic approach by a member of the department, either a professor or a graduate student, is ideal for understanding the potential outcomes from service-learning at a site. Of course, there is always the possibility that a student will come out with an experience entirely different than what was found, but it is less likely with such methods.

How to best make-do in a service-learning environment rife with tactics is essential for a long-lasting, effective, program. Expectations for what students and community partners will do usually assumes that they directly discuss their needs and desires. We know that they will not do this. Instead, bets must be hedged. Ways to ensure that students will not engage in some of these tactics must be considered. They need not be paranoid or vigilant, but mindful of the way in which different parties maneuver. As observed within upper division, a close curricular connection is essential to ensure that students are not able to weasel out of their responsibilities. In this situation, the connection between curriculum and service is so integral, it is difficult to avoid doing the service to understand the course.

Part of the implementation of service-learning within the curriculum is the implementation of adequate reflection for students. Reflection helps students make connections to the course curriculum, but it is also a means of ensuring that students are actually going through with their service-learning. This accountability makes tactics

subject to discovery, undermining students' attempts at avoidance and subversion, but also can potentially uncover occasions when community partners have wronged students.

It is also important to recognize that sites have very different needs than the department or students. Community partners have significant agency and will exercise a variety of practices to ensure their continued operation. These practices may be supportive of department and students or they may reflect only self-interest. Key to ensuring that these practices do not occur is an understanding of the needs of the organization in question. This understanding must include an appreciation for the interdependence of the focal organization has and ideas of how they will direct the organization.

Service-learning, despite the complexity of implementation and challenges associated with it, is a valuable practice for educators, students, and community partners. Few other opportunities within undergraduate education connect students so tangibly to the outside world and introduce them to embodiments of the concepts they are learning about directly. Few other practices offer such viable bridges to futures while still giving back to the community. As the practice declines in prevalence, it will be difficult to compensate for its loss.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Schedule for Anthropology Department Professors

1. How long have you been part of the MNSU Anthropology Department?
2. If you have, what classes have you taught that included a service-learning component?
3. What do you believe is the purpose of the Service-Learning program?
4. How has the Service-Learning program changed over time?
5. What have been your experiences interacting with:
 - a. service-learning students?
 - b. Anthropology Department coordinators?
 - c. community members?
6. How does service-learning impact the classes that you teach?
7. How do you think service-learners impact the community programs they participate in?
8. What are the benefits of using service-learning in class?
9. What are the detriments of using service-learning in class?
10. What are your suggestions to improve the Service-Learning program?

Interview Schedule for Service-Learners

1. What is your age, gender, grade level, and major/minor?
2. With what class(es) and coordinator(s) did you do service-learning?
3. What organization(s) did you work with and what did you do?
4. How do you feel your participation affected the organization(s) with which you worked?
5. How did service-learning supplement and/or reinforce the material learned in the class(es)?
6. What were some positive parts to the service-learning component in the course(s) that you took?
7. What would you change or recommend to improve the service-learning program?
8. Have your feelings changed about service-learning following your participation?
9. What was your experience with the people you worked with at the site(s)?
10. What learning experiences did you take away from service-learning?
11. Have you taken a course in the Anthropology Department without a service-learning component?
 - a. If yes, which class(es) and who taught the class(es)?
12. Did the course material feel connected to the world outside of the classroom?
13. Would a service-learning component have been helpful to the course?
 - a. If so, why?
 - b. If not, why?
14. Comparing courses that you have taken with a service-learning component and without, do you feel service-learning is a productive use of time? Please explain.

- a. Would a different activity have been a better component to the course curriculum? Please explain.

Interview Schedule for Coordinators

1. How do you think the students perceived the service-learning program?
2. How do you think the service-learning program supplemented and/or reinforced the material learned in the classes?
3. What do you believe the students learned in participating in the program?
4. How well do you think the organizations responded to the service-learning program?
5. Were there any particular organizations that were better or worse in working with the service-learning program?
6. How well do you feel you were trained for the role as Service-learning Coordinator?
7. What did you learn from being a coordinator?
8. What do you feel you contributed to the program as a coordinator?
9. How well do you think that the goals of the program were met?
10. What are your suggestions to improve the program?

Interview Schedule for Community Members:

1. How long have you been part of the MNSU Anthropology Service-Learning program?
2. What projects have you done that involve service-learners?
3. How has working with the Service-Learning program changed over time?
4. What have been your experiences interacting with service-learning coordinators and Anthropology Department faculty?
5. What trends have you noticed in the type of students that help in your projects?
6. How do the programs impact the service-learners?
7. How do the service-learners impact the programs they participate in?
8. What are the benefits of using service-learners in your program?
9. What are the detriments of using service-learners in your program?
10. What are your suggestions to improve the Service-Learning program?